

STANFORD UNIVERSITY SCHOOL OF MEDICINE

STANFORD MEDICAL CENTER  
PALO ALTO, CALIFORNIA 94304

DEPARTMENT OF GENETICS

December 8, 1967

Area Code 415  
321-1200

Hon. Jesse Unruh  
Speaker,  
The State Assembly  
Sacramento, California

Dear Mr. Unruh:

Against the background of all the excited and angry recriminations about the disturbances at San Francisco State College, your action in calling for legislative hearings was most commendable. In my own view, based on the limited set of facts that appeared in the public press, Dr. Sumerskill acted with great resolve and personal courage in an extremely difficult situation. The disturbances were dissipated one step short of serious bloodshed, which reflects a more successful management than has characterized many other riot situations.

No one now will dispute the necessity of a firm insistence on law and order. There is a reasonable prospect that the whole community at San Francisco State has been educated about this in a way that is unique among American campuses. The radical activists thrive on indiscriminate, panicky over-reactions.

However, I find myself embarrassed by the lack of some of the kind of facts that your hearing should develop, and which we should all have before we ultimately decide whether Dr. Sumerskill should be castigated or congratulated.

Sincerely yours,

Joshua Lederberg  
Professor of Genetics

JL/gem

UNRUH